

of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-first.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 11:34 a.m., July 5, 2007]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on July 6.

Remarks Following a Visit With Wounded Troops at Walter Reed Army Medical Center and an Exchange With Reporters
July 3, 2007

The President. Thank you very much. General, thank you very much for your hospitality. It's a true honor to come to Walter Reed to be able to see the docs and nurses, the physical therapists who are working with our wounded soldiers. The care here is remarkable. There has been some bureaucratic redtape issues in the past that the military is working hard to cure. But when it comes time to healing broken bodies, this is a fabulous place.

I am constantly amazed at the character and courage of those who wear our uniform. And that's no more vividly displayed than here in this place of healing. I want to thank our soldiers, sailors, and marines, airmen, coast guards men and women for their service to the country. I thank their families. As we head into the Fourth of July, we're a fortunate nation to have people who are willing to volunteer in the face of danger to help secure this country in the long run.

I'll be glad to answer two questions from you.

I. Lewis Libby

Q. Mr. President, are you willing to rule out that you will eventually pardon Scooter Libby?

The President. First of all, I had to make a very difficult decision. I weighed this decision carefully. I thought that the jury verdict should stand. I felt the punishment was severe, and so I made a decision that would commute his sentence but leave in place a serious fine and probation. As to the future, I rule nothing in and nothing out.

Q. Mr. President, Federal sentencing guidelines call for jail time in these kinds of cases of perjury and obstruction of justice. Why do you feel otherwise, and are you worried that this decision sends a signal that you won't go to jail if you lie to the FBI?

The President. I took this decision very seriously on Mr. Libby. I considered his background, his service to the country, as well as the jury verdict. I felt like the jury verdict ought to stand, and I felt like some of the punishments that the judge determined were adequate should stand. But I felt like the 30-month sentencing was severe. I made a judgment, a considered judgment that I believe is the right decision to make in this case, and I stand by it.

Thank you all very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:08 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Maj. Gen. Eric B. Schoomaker, USA, commanding general, North Atlantic Regional Medical Command and Walter Reed Army Medical Center.

Joint Declaration by President George W. Bush and President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia on Nuclear Energy and Nonproliferation Joint Actions
July 3, 2007

We are determined to play an active role in making the advantages of the peaceful use of nuclear energy available to a wide range of interested States, in particular developing countries, provided the common goal of prevention of proliferation of nuclear weapons is achieved. To this end, we intend, together with others, to initiate a new format for enhanced cooperation.

Bearing this in mind, we acknowledge with satisfaction the initialing of the bilateral Agreement between the Government of the Russian Federation and the Government of the United States of America for cooperation in the field of peaceful use of nuclear energy. We share the view that this Agreement will provide an essential basis for the expansion of Russian-U.S. cooperation in the field of peaceful use of nuclear energy and expect this document to be signed and brought into